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THE MINORITY QUESTION IN IFE POLITICS, 1946–2014

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ABSTRACT The minority problem has been a major issue of interest at both the micro and national levels. Aside from the acclaimed Yoruba homogeneity and the notion of Ile-Ife as the cradle of Yoruba civilization, relationships between Ife indigenes and other communities in Ife Division (now in Osun State, Nigeria) have generated issues due to, and influenced by, political representation. Where allegations of marginalization have not been leveled, accommodation has been based on extraneous considerations, similar to the ways in which outright exclusion and/or extermination have been put forward. Not only have suspicion, feelings of outright rejection, and subtle antagonism characterized majority–minority relations in Ife Division/Administrative Zone, they have also produced political-cum-administrative and territorial adjustments. As a microcosm of the Nigerian state, whose major challenge since attaining political independence has been the harmonization of interests among the various ethnic groups in the country, the Ife situation presents a peculiar example of the myths and realities of majority domination and minority resistance/response, or even a supposed minority attempt at domination. This study examines the nature of relationships between Ile-Ife and its surrounding communities, all of which are organized using a nomenclature that has been variously called Ife Division, District, Constituency, or Zone since 1946. It examines the claims or allegations of marginalization *vis-à-vis* efforts at integration and accommodation over a period of time with the aim of determining trends and/or changes or shifts, along with their underlying causes and implications. Given that political accommodation mostly goes beyond ethnic or sub-ethnic factors and defies majority–minority permutations, this study contends that building bridges across ethnic or sub-ethnic divides will enhance reciprocity and the eventual accommodation of the supposed minority.

Key Words: Minority; Identity; Representation; Marginalization; Harmonization; Outlying communities; Sub-ethnicities; Politics; Yoruba nationalism; Communal crisis.

INTRODUCTION

Eliminating conflicts at various levels of interaction among people of different orientations is a major challenge for leadership in Africa. The conflicts, usually inter-group in nature, masquerade as ethnic, religious, political, and gender-related issues. Most of the time, resolving these conflicts is as complicated as the conflicts themselves, since those in positions of authority have usually emerged through the conspiratorial support of these interest groups. Therefore, leaders find themselves in a precarious situation, as any action taken by them can be misinterpreted by the conflicting groups depending on who is at the receiving end. In a situation where a decision is detrimental to a group with whom a leader publicly identifies, he is accused of betraying, abandoning, and neglecting his constituency. Therefore, African leaders are usually conscious of when and how they intervene in conflicts to avoid stepping on toes. In these situations, the therapy

applied to the ailment often complicates the situation. This predicament for government has become a serious threat to nation building, especially in the area of inter-group relations on the continent. This has invariably increased the tendency toward insecurity in majority–minority relations in largely heterogeneous African societies. This perennial state of inter-group conflict seems to have become the benchmark for defining, negatively, the state of politics in Africa.

African leaders and many other groups and individuals have made considerable efforts to solve these common problems. However, the competition for relevance by various non-formal groups has made cordial relationships among these unequal factions a precarious proposition. Given the growing desire for a separate identity as a prerequisite for group status and true nationality, this paper discusses issues of groups in Nigeria that consider themselves ‘minorities’ using the Ife Division (now Ife Federal Constituency), presently in Osun state, as a case study. These groups often interpret actions taken by the so-called ‘majorities’ as attempts to dominate and/or suppress them.

Nigeria has experienced a series of conflicts arising from inter-group misunderstandings, in diverse dimensions, having broad implications. However, the ‘fire brigade’ approach by the government in attempting to solve this problem has not always been effective. Beyond their distracting and destabilizing impacts, group prejudices arising from majority–minority antagonism have thwarted government programs and hindered community and national development. Thus, such problems constitute a major challenge for leadership and state building in the country.

ETHNICITY AND THE QUEST FOR IDENTITY IN NIGERIA

Ethnicity has been identified as a major feature of politics in Nigeria (Olarinmoye, 2007). Political participation and competition for space in the system is identity-based, with everyone depending on his or her ethnic, religious, and regional background in the struggle for state power, resource allocation, and even citizenship (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005). The delay in attaining independence for the country has been caused partly by the tensions of majority–minority relationships, which necessitated the founding of the Henry Willink Commission to determine how to reduce ethno-religious suspicions among Nigerians (Akinyele, 2003). It would appear that since the 1914 unification, establishing a stable and united country has remained a major challenge. Most worrisome is the constant palpable fear among the various ethnic groups, despite the network of relationships among them. Suffice it to say that the perceptions of the country by its leaders worsen the quest for national unity. For instance, two leading First Republic politicians expressed negative opinions about Nigeria. The first was the Premier of the Eastern Region, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (1943), who said that Nigeria was ‘a federation of aboriginal African Tribes and Nations’. The second person was Obafemi Awolowo (1960) of the Western Region who referred to the country as ‘a mere geographical expression’. Their counterpart from the then Northern Region, Sir Ahmadu Bello (Akinyele, 2003), was quoted to have said, in

plain terms, on a state visit to Egypt in 1958 that:

The innavigable ocean of sand that appears to separate Northern Nigeria, a Moslem state from her brothers, the Moslem states of Egypt and the Middle East was a greater unifying element than the network of rails and roads linking the federation of Nigeria together.

The above are the views of the first generation of Nigerian leaders and little has been done to obliterate these negative views, or to improve the unity of the amalgamated ethnic groups. This perception seems to have informed the independent observation that:

Nigeria is a geographical expression applied to a territory in West Africa, which, by successive stages, covering a period of more than one hundred years, under circumstances widely differing in character and incentive, and almost wholly as a result of the initial enterprise of British explorers and merchants, has passed under the protection of Britain (Morel, 1968).

It would seem that Nigeria's ethnic and sectional nationalist struggles of the pre-independence era and of the First Republic provide the foundation for contemporary competition for relevance among the various ethnic interest groups. However, playing down pre-colonial inter-group relations (e.g., trade contacts, inter-marriages, and diplomatic relations) suggests colonial manipulation to justify illegal occupation of the region and administrative control of Nigerian wealth during the period of colonization (Hodgkin, 1969). This is not to minimize the impact of ethnic conflicts and minority questions on inter-group relations of Nigerians.

The 1954 establishment of a federal structure of three regions, namely, the northern, western, and eastern regions, has been characterized as an inherently divisive, disintegrative, and potentially unstable polity as it promoted the invidious political hegemony of the Hausa-Fulani-dominated northern region, and fostered ethnic majority chauvinism and secessionism by erecting the boundaries of the northern, western, and eastern regions around the major ethnic groups of Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo, respectively. This fomented ethnic minority tensions because it denied non-Hausa-Fulani, non-Yoruba and non-Igbo groups the security of their own regions and encouraged considerable ethno-regional polarization (Olarinmoye, 2007).

The foundation laid by the emergence of ethnicity-based political parties and actors has resulted in a situation in which virtually every corner clamors for ethnic identities for the over 200 language groups in the country. Worse still, the political education of the masses and sensitization programs for the elite are institutionally channeled towards the realization of ethnic sovereignty within the country (Nnamani, 2001). The emphasis on division and differences notwithstanding, it has been established that there are more factors that unite the indigenous Nigerian populations than otherwise (Otite, 1976).

Also relevant to this study are cultural and civic nationalism. Cultural nation-

alism rests on linguistic, educational, and artistic rejuvenation of a cultural community or nation (Hutchinson, 1992). This is expressed in the forms of ideational and material cultures, especially aesthetic values that are regarded as the cultural touchstones and prides of a particular cultural group (Ajala, 2009). On the other hand, civic nationalism is a political struggle for autonomy by a people who share common heritage and seek freedom from an oppressive majority (Hutchinson & Smith, 1994). Cultural nationalism also connects the small-scale grassroots, socio-cultural organizations and associations that engage in the struggle for recognition of their cultural heritage and the expression of cultural pride (Hutchinson, 1978). Nigeria has a mixture of the two types of nationalism, with numerous sub-ethnic groups spread across the country; this said, civic nationalism appeals more to minorities seeking freedom from the supposedly oppressive majority.

Although the problems of majority–minority inequality and competition for power exist in each of the six geopolitical zones into which the country was divided in 1996, the official response by the government has been grossly inadequate. Neither the creation of more states nor the establishment of more local councils have proved sufficient to tackle the problem, as the attempts this far have produced many weak and nonviable entities that cannot survive without subventions from the government at the center. This is in addition to the seemingly unending agitation for more states and local councils, which invariably brings about the emergence of new minority groups (Adesoji, 2011). As a microcosm of the larger Nigerian society, the situation in Ile-Ife and its surrounding communities, categorized broadly as the Ife Division or Administrative zone, largely reflect the feelings of oppression harbored by supposed minority groups elsewhere, with a strong desire for freedom, equality, and a voice, particularly in political matters, given that access to resources, no matter how little, determines the fates of groups.

THE SEARCH FOR THE MINORITY

Minority as a concept has a situational application. Whenever a group of people in a society considers its interests threatened, it tends to resort to minority agitation to attract sympathetic consideration either from within or without. This perspective leads to the assumption that a minority is a subordinate group whose members have significantly less control or power over resources that, ordinarily, should be within their reach, as members of that society. A minority group is thus whatever the concerned group assumes itself to be, depending on the context and situation. What is not in doubt is that such groups usually have fewer opportunities than those of other groups in that society.

A minority group is defined as those whose members, due to social, physical, or cultural differences, receive differential treatment and, as such, regard themselves as a group of people apart. Such groups are excluded from certain opportunities, especially full participation in the national polity (Wirth, 1941). Furthermore, minorities are sub-groups within a larger society, disadvantaged by prejudice, discrimination, segregation and, in certain instances, persecution at the hands

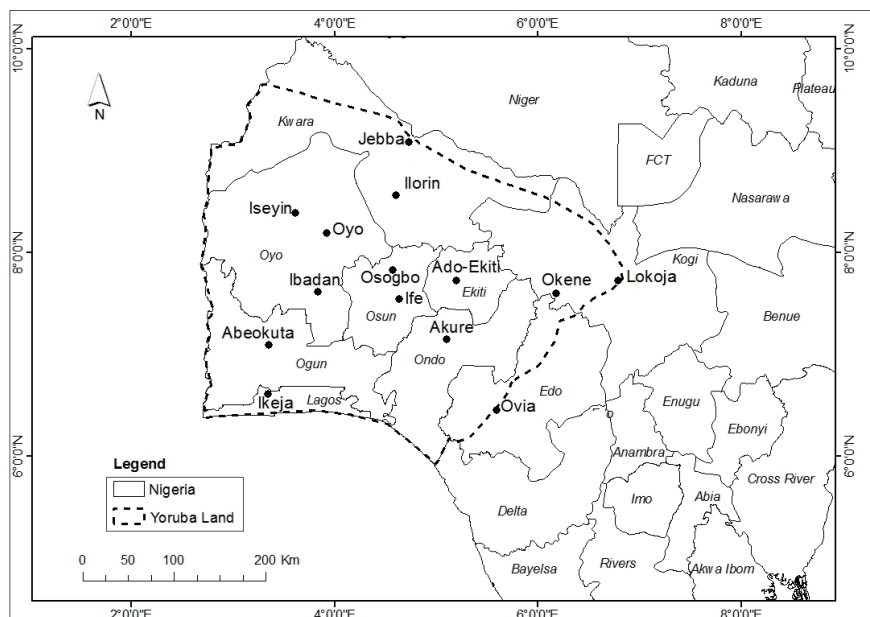


Fig. 1. Map showing the distribution of Yoruba people

of other sub-groups usually referred to as the majority (Harris, 1959). There are four main categories of minority, namely, racial, ethnic, gender, and religious (Marmanjan, n.d.). This paper focuses on ethnicity-related minority–majority issues in a major Yoruba society. In the context of ethnicity, the majority or minority group concept is characterized by a people with common social and cultural backgrounds, without prejudice relating to gender, religion, or professional categorizations (Reader, 1999).

In Nigeria, there are several sub-ethnic groups within the known major ethnic groups. The Yoruba ethnic group could be considered homogeneous from the viewpoint of their overwhelming claim to a common ancestral link to Ile-Ife as well as their cultural attachment to the legendary revolutionary leader, Oduduwa, who has been associated with the centralization of a monarchical indigenous administration (Ogundiran, 2003; Eyo, 1974). This connection to a hereditary lineage, referred to as the Ebi system, has always been employed by the Yoruba to form a common ground for unity within the Nigerian nation-state.

The Yoruba are not completely homogenous, however. The many sub-groups that share certain common historical or cultural features still have a number of distinguishing features. To outsiders, the Yoruba are considered a single ethnic group, but closer examination reveals the existence of various sub-groups with distinctive elements of separate identity. Therefore, classification can be organized on the basis of variants in their Yoruba language intonation and the meaning of certain words, cultural peculiarities, and differences in their historical links to, or

association with, Oduduwa. More often than not, these sub-groups claim superiority over one another based on these distinguishing factors while conflict over land between and among the communities is commonplace. The Yoruba-speaking sub-groups, such as Ijebu, Ijesa, Ekiti, Ife, Egba, Ondo, Ilaje, Oyo, Igbomina, Akoko, Ikale, and Ibarapa, are spread across six predominantly Yoruba states in southwestern Nigeria and three other states in the North-central and South-south regions of Nigeria where the Yoruba have a considerable presence, as shown in Fig. 1.

As a result of colonial imposition, beginning in the 1880s, the early Yoruba intelligentsia and clergies engaged in cultural nationalism through the use of a common origin myth, geographical location, language, political ideologies, local crafts, and popular cultures to establish a pan-Yoruba pride and cultural superiority in colonial Nigeria. This cultural pride was also translated into a political project starting in the 1940s under the aegis of Egbe Omo Oduduwa and Action Group (AG), among others (Awolowo, 1960; Lawal, 2004). It involved an appropriation of the legacies of cultural nationalism to negotiate inclusion in colonial government and to gain political control of postcolonial Nigeria. The Yoruba origin myth was re-invented to bind all Yoruba groups together as a political constituency and create a collective consciousness of being Yoruba and, in doing so, resulted in a feeling of superiority over other ethnic groups in Nigeria.

However, before the efforts at promoting Yoruba unity in the 1940s, these differences became popularized in the 19th century when the seemingly homogenous region erupted into a century of devastating civil warfare (Ajayi, 1998). The impression of a Yoruba-homogenous society in the face of the above classifications and differences, which were hitherto rarely considered, has spurred academic enquiries into the status of the ethnic group and its various peoples (Olomola, 1979; Adediran, 1980). It is necessary to mention here that Ile-Ife was connected. Located at the heart of Yorubaland and recognized as the Orirun (source) of the people where, according to myth, the dead among the Oba (kings) often return, Ife never really developed a sense of exclusive territorial possession that required a strong army for self-defense like other towns, since it felt insulated from any external attack. It was the attack on Apomu, one of its outlying towns, by the Owu army that led to the escalation of conflicts in Yorubaland (Akinjogbin, 1992).

Ife is located at 7.00–7.35°N, 4.20–4.45°E. It is about 56 km from Osogbo, the Osun state capital. It shares common borders with Ijesaland, which is 32 km away, and is about 100 km away from Akure, the capital of Ondo state. Ife lies at an elevation of 275–300 m above mean sea level (Omisore, 2002). The city has five indigenous quarters and, with its surrounding communities, is organized into four local government council areas and an area office (Fig. 2). The city is surrounded immediately by Ifetedo to the south, the seven Origbo communities⁽¹⁾ to the north, Ifewara to the southeast, and Osu to the southwest (Hassan, 2010).

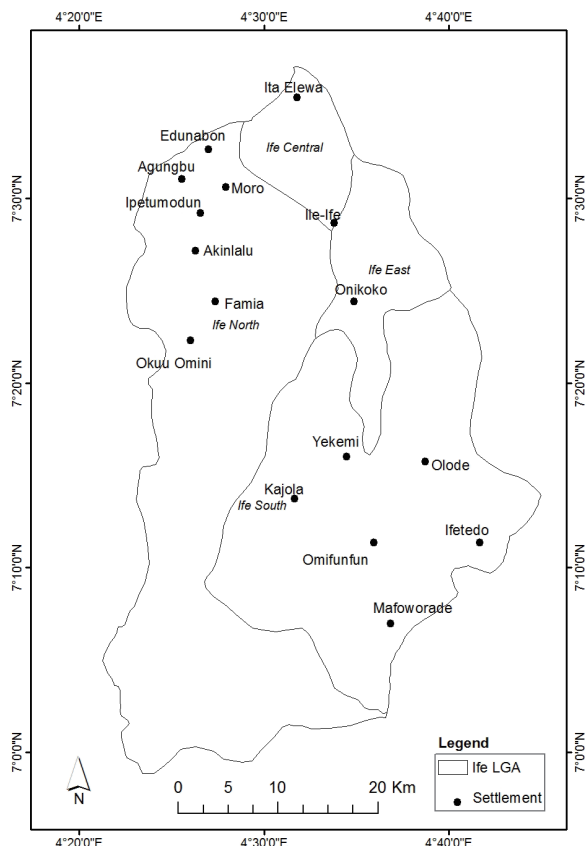


Fig. 2. Map of Ife zone showing the location of Ile-Ife and the outlying communities

EMERGING MINORITY GROUPS IN IFE?

By the time the Yoruba wars subsided in the late 19th century, Ile-Ife had virtually lost its traditional political status and obviously lost or conceded much of its previous territorial possessions to Ibadan, the emerging dominant power of the Yoruba states. Following the devastating wars, some Yoruba sub-groups sought permanent residence in the city because of forced migration. Thus, the city was infiltrated by supposed war refugees, mostly Oyo-speaking groups who later settled permanently in the city. Gradually, the various outlying communities of Ile-Ife were heavily populated by migrant settlers, and the indigenous population in Ife became increasingly overwhelmed in their own land. Some of these new groups, such as the seven Origbo communities, Apomu, Ikire, Gbongan, and Modakeke, were Oyo-speaking, with sworn loyalty to Ibadan. At its borders, Ife was squeezed in between Oyo and Egba in the northwest, Ijebu in the south, Owu in the west, Ondo in the southeast, and Ijesa in the northeast. This development brought Ife into conflict over territorial boundaries with these communities for many years (Adejuyigbe, 1975). Politically, Ife came under the control

of Ibadan to the extent that the latter became an arbiter in the resolution of the Ife–Modakeke crisis.

With the emergence of Sir Adesoji Aderemi as the Ooni of Ife in 1930, the ancient town seemed to have regained its *primus inter pares* status in the region. Furthermore, the involvement of the monarch in active politics of the then Western region favored Ile-Ife. There was also increased interest from elites across Yorubaland in forming town unions, with the aim of promoting popular self-actualization agendas and fostering communal development and aspirations. These unions, variously called descendant unions, improvement societies, and welfare associations, drew membership from within the communities. Although various factors have been suggested for the emergence, forms, and operational methodologies of the unions, their presence in colonial and postcolonial Nigerian society engendered unity and development, and simultaneously caused disaffection among competing communities (Adesoji, 2008; Omoni, 1984; Nnoli, 1976). There were various such unions in the Ife area, such as Egbe Omo Ife, Ipetumodu Descendants Union, and Modakeke Progressive Union (MPU).

The realization that the traditional elite were incapable of modern societal challenges, given their lack of western education, was also critical to the formation of these unions. However, in struggling to promote individual and community emancipation and development, the unions sometimes caused alienation through their actions (Fadipe, 1970). This was the case with the MPU, which championed the struggle against land rent (Isakole), bringing it into direct conflict with Ile-Ife. In petitions forwarded to the Ooni of Ife in 1946 and 1947, the MPU indicated the non-readiness of Modakeke people to continue with their rent payments. This crisis dragged on until the 1950s, with increasingly widespread political effects. Even when efforts were made to settle the differences, the desire to create a separate identity by the Modakeke prolonged the process, with considerable effects on the political fortunes of the Ooni in particular and the city of Ile-Ife in general. For instance, the close association of the Ife monarch with the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (a socio-political group synonymous with the ruling AG in the Western region) put the neutrality of the government in the Ife-Modakeke crisis into serious doubt (Adesoji et al., 2012).

By 1951, the Nigeria (Constitution) Order-in-Council, also known as the Macpherson Constitution, was enacted. It made provisions for the establishment of the House of Chiefs and the House of Assembly in the Western Region. Sir Aderemi was appointed chairman of the Western Region House of Chiefs while he served as a Federal Minister without portfolio around the same time (Richardson, 2003; Oyediran, 1972). Although this development was novel and offered the opportunity to boost the status of Ile-Ife in Yoruba politics, the political elite in the city saw it differently. Aggressive opposition by politicians made the Oba unpopular in the city, leading to rebellion against him from within. This provided an opportunity for minorities to further pursue their separate identity projects. Previously, traditional rulers merely performed advisory roles in political affairs, hence the uproar that greeted this innovation.

A major test for the minority–majority question in the Ife area came during the divisional election of 1955. A new local government law was enacted that

divided the old Ife Native Authority into five councils, namely the Ife division, Ife district, Ifetedo, Edunabon-Moro, and Ipetumodu local councils, with 92 seats in the division (23 for the chiefs and 69 for elected candidates). Of the 69 seats for elected candidates, 32 were allocated to the five wards of Ife, 14 for Modakeke, and 23 for the other districts. As expected, all the seats in Modakeke were won by the minority parties, with no vote for the ruling AG in Modakeke or other Oyo-speaking communities in the zone. This was an embarrassing political defeat for the warring factions Erinjogunola (of the monarch) and Talaka Parapo (of the opposition elite class), both within the ruling AG.⁽²⁾

The outcome of the election led to the AG setting up a special committee to investigate the development, and attempt to resolve the internal crisis. It would seem that the Ife political class underrated the potential of minorities to unite against Ife, forming a group called MORIFILA (an acronym for M-Modakeke, OR-Origbo, IF-Ifetedo, and ILA-Ila) with “the sole purpose of controlling Ife politics” (Oyediran, 1974). This was the political situation in Ile-Ife in the period before Nigeria’s independence. At independence, the Ife elite did not cease to struggle with the Ooni for political relevance. For example, the issue of the Ife forest reserve emerged as a point of conflict, and they pursued it to the letter, so that in 1970 the monarch was forced to relinquish the control of the forest reserve (Oyediran, 1972; Akinrinade & Akinjogbin, 1992).

The 1976 local government reform of the Murtala/Obasanjo government excised Ila district from Ile-Ife. With this development, political relevance became a struggle between Ile-Ife and the remaining minority groups of Modakeke, Origbo, and Ifetedo. Again, diplomacy became a tool for relationships among the different groups in the region. Ife groups saw that the accommodation of minorities was one way in which they could compete successfully with enemies from the outside. Therefore, the elite embraced minorities and underplayed the question of discrimination, which provided a level playing field for all. It was this situation that facilitated the emergence of individuals from minority groups between 1963 and 1981 as chairmen of Ife District, the Ife Divisional Council, and the Oranmiyan Central local government, including Chief T. O. Oloyede from Modakeke (1963–1965), Prof. I. A. Akinjogbin from Ipetumodu (1973–1976), Mr. A. O. Oyemade from Modakeke (1976–1979) and Chief T. O. Obiwumi from Edunabon, who became chairman in 1980. They all presided over the administrative affairs of Ife zone without any hindrance from the palace of the Ooni of Ife, where the secretariat was situated, or even the people.⁽³⁾ It was during Chief Obiwumi’s tenure that Sir Aderemi joined his ancestors.

The participation of many in the politics of Ife zone, without discrimination over place of origin, during this period was aided by several factors. First, the competition for power in the politics of the Ife zone did not focus on the minority–majority issue. There were group affiliations across communities, aided by the fact that most politicians from either majority or minority communities attended the same schools and had developed friendly relationships from their school days. Some of the schools were Oduduwa College, Ile-Ife, St. John’s Grammar School, Ile-Ife, Modakeke High School, Modakeke, Origbo Community Grammar School, Ipetumodu, and Ifetedo Grammar School, Ifetedo. These long associations afforded

familiarity and encouraged the emergence of competent leaders across sub-ethnic divides. Additionally, since some of the elections were held on a zero-party basis, electoral victory was based on track record rather than ethnic affiliation.

Another factor that encouraged unity in the Ife zone was that the emergent political system in the country called for strong home support to confront the challenges of state and national political scheming. Any serious politician in a micro polity like the Ife zone could not afford to lose home support if he wanted an electoral victory. Equally, there was an integration of people from both majority and minority communities within various elite groups, clubs, and societies, to the extent that residents often referred to Ile-Ife as a major metropolitan city in the zone. These factors, among others, encouraged unity in the zone and aided the emergence of both Oyemade and Obiwumi as chairmen of the Oranmiyan central local government, as discussed above.

THE DAWN OF PERPETUAL ACRIMONY

At the death of Sir Aderemi, the healthy relationship among the various communities in Ife zone started a downward trend. It naturally occurred to everyone that there were indeed certain differences among the various bordering communities not only with regard to socio-cultural issues but also in relation to political supremacy and claims over land. This sudden realization caused a demarcation between Ife (the supposed majority based on land ownership and a relatively higher population) and its neighbors (the self-styled minority groups), supported by the Yoruba philosophy of *'Oko kii je ti Baba t'Omo ki o ma ni aala'*, meaning a piece of farmland cannot but have boundaries no matter what the relationship of the owners. For instance, between the periods marking the rite of passage for the late Ooni and the coronation of the new one, Chief Obiwumi vacated the council secretariat located at the Ooni's palace because he came from the Oyo-speaking community, and tradition forbids non-indigenes from witnessing some aspects of the rites. His deputy, Hon. Abdulkareem Elusanmi Ajayi, a native of Ile-Ife from the Okereke quarter took over in an acting capacity.

Chief Obiwumi never returned to office due to certain developments during and immediately after the ascendance of Ooni Okunade Sijuwade, Olubuse II. At his coronation, the new monarch was said to have made some pronouncements that were detrimental to the seemingly cordial relationships among the various groups in Ife zone that had existed during the time of Sir Aderemi. In particular, he was alleged to have referred to Modakeke as 'Isale Ife' implying a second-class, inconsequential community. The minority represented by Modakeke reacted swiftly to this by discontinuing rent payments on farmland belonging to Ife families but cultivated by Modakeke farmers. Therefore, the relationship between Ile-Ife and its immediate neighbor, Modakeke, which was diplomatically managed by the previous Ooni of Ife, became precarious at the start of the reign of Ooni Sijuwade. This was to define the mood and tempo of Ife politics in subsequent years.

The emergence of Ooni Sijuwade, who was pronounced by the oracle to be

a reincarnation of his grandfather, Adelekan Olubuse, and his declaration to complete the unfinished job of the latter appeared to have renewed animosities between Ife and Modakeke communities. It would seem, therefore, that the series of songs composed for the new Ooni inspired his desire to delve into an issue that, though unresolved, was gradually waning. Beyond containing elements of historical antecedents and the valiant traditions of his lineage, the songs challenged his ability to repeat the feat of his grandfather (Adesoji, 2012). Not helping matters was the purported warning by the oracle to the Modakeke against the mission of the new Oba.⁽⁴⁾

Generally, songs are powerful social instruments used by the Yoruba to shape events and prompt actions from the people. Songs, like panegyrics, sometimes have a spiritual element designed to connect the living with the dead. Through songs, important historical information is revealed (Delano, 1973). The interpretation of the songs composed for Ooni Sijuwade during his coronation created a general atmosphere of fear and elicited negative reactions from the non-Ife, and a sense of division. Therefore, the competition for relevance and representation in Ife politics developed a new dimension, culminating in public disturbances in 1981 and 1983. It was obvious that the Ife were not prepared for this development, which led to many casualties on their side.⁽⁵⁾

In contrast to the period before Ooni Sijuwade, when minorities in other communities were involved in the politics of Ife, the Oyo in Modakeke became the sub-group most directly involved in the struggle with Ife. This could be explained by the fact that it was located most closely to Ile-Ife and had largely indiscernible boundaries. It was also a group of people which related most closely to Ife indigenes, as a people who were given land to farm, or who paid rent on the land, or who worked as laborers on Ife farms for a wage. In addition, like other Oyo sub-groups, they had occupied a preeminent political position in the district, a privilege that had gradually waned following the combative posture of Ooni Sijuwade. The threat posed by Ooni Sijuwade's stance, and the fear of possible alienation or even complete annihilation *vis-à-vis* the desire on the part of the Modakeke to promote or sustain their separate identity, naturally heightened sub-ethnic tensions, eventually culminating in open conflict in the 1980s.

The realization of the existence of differences among communities in the past notwithstanding, it took certain circumstances, developments, and even personalities to either escalate or downplay it. It would appear that Ooni Sijuwade escalated the sense of differences, particularly between Modakeke and Ife, by abandoning accommodation, which previously had been the norm and, in the process, he exacerbated simmering anger, brought out into the open by the performance of traditional rites for a dead king. Also related was the cue the community took from such leadership, which, by composing special songs to eulogize the warring nature of the Ooni Sijuwade's Olubuse dynasty, escalated the problem. Modakeke decided, in response, once again not to pay rent and prepared to defend their community beyond simply promoting their identity.

COMMUNAL CRISIS

The communal crisis in Ifeland between 1981 and 1983 was both a major challenge to the 'Ebi' system concept among the Yoruba and a frontal attack on the age-long convention of the sacrosanctity of the Ife Kingdom. Previously, Ile-Ife, recognized as the spiritual home of the Yoruba, had been insulated from any kind of attack. The violation of this convention with the attack on Apomu, a market town in Ife territory, in 1821 and the temporary sack of Ife by a combination of Modakeke and Ibadan forces in 1852 were seen as factors responsible for the outbreak and escalation of the Yoruba civil wars in the 19th century (Ajayi & Smith, 1971; Omosini, 1992; Olaniyan, 1992; Akinjogbin, 1998). The capability of Ile-Ife to serve as a safe haven for refugees from war-threatened towns was enhanced by this convention to the point that Ife was seen as a home for all (Johnson, 1969). Obviously a culmination of pent-up anger over a long period, the crisis in the 1980s was triggered by the desire of the political elite for recognition and the struggle for votes, given their recognition and manipulation of the differences between Ife and its Oyo sub-group neighbors, particularly in Modakeke. The Oyo state government, controlled by the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), pitched its tent with Ife, while the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) led Federal-government-supported Modakeke (Alao, 2004). Beyond escalating the crisis and widening the gulf between Ife and Modakeke, it polarized Yorubaland and generally disturbed the Nigerian polity, particularly given the widespread belief in the use of the 'federal might' to aid Modakeke.⁽⁶⁾

Its seeming partisan position notwithstanding, the Oyo state government under Chief Bola Ige intervened in the crisis. In addition to inaugurating a consultative committee comprising representatives from the two communities to 'facilitate understanding among our people',⁽⁷⁾ a Commission of Inquiry under the leadership of Justice Ibidapo-Obe was inaugurated on April 15, 1981, with the following instructions:

- (i) to investigate the cause or causes of the eruption of violence between different sections of the community at Oranmiyan Central Local Government area in April, 1981

- (ii) to enquire into the role played by various community leaders within and outside the Oranmiyan Central Local Government area to escalate or diffuse tension both shortly before and after the riots

- (iii) to investigate the role played by various public functionaries, including law enforcement agencies shortly before and after the riots

- (iv) to make a general appraisal of the security situation in Oranmiyan Central Local Government area with a view to ascertaining the adequacy or otherwise of the law enforcement system there for the purpose of encouraging peaceful co-existence among the different communities in the area

- (v) to find out the extent of loss or damage done to life and property, to quantify it where possible, and to apportion blame

- (vi) to submit a written report with appropriate recommendations to the Governor on or before the 15th day of May, 1981

- (vii) to investigate the role of mass media in the disturbances; whether a news

report has been fair, factual and objective, or false, inaccurate and tendentious, has an effect on the frame of mind of the listeners or readers who are the *dramatis personae*.⁽⁸⁾

Aside from achieving a temporary truce and enforcing peace in the area, the UPN-led Oyo state government could not resolve the dispute. This explained its recurrence in 1983, which partly contributed to the loss of power by UPN in the state to Dr. Omololu Olunloyo of the NPN. Modakeke became emboldened, therefore, in its hostility to Ife and pursued its separate identity project vigorously, demanding in the process a separate local government, the elevation and crowning of its traditional head chief, and obliteration of all links with Ile-Ife, its long-time host, neighbor, and benefactor. Although there was no renewed open conflict between Ife and Modakeke until 1997, deep-seated animosity continued and could not be resolved by the short-lived NPN government nor by the successive military administrations in the state.⁽⁹⁾

Interestingly, other Oyo sub-groups in the Origbo communities and other places like Olode (Awolowo Town), which also grew in size with time, neither joined the fray nor took up arms against Ife. Rather, they were harassed and vilified by Modakeke for co-existing peacefully with Ife. This became the subsequent pattern. However, the Origbo communities competed for political space and challenged the dominance of Ife with the advent of civil rule beginning in 1999.

COMPETITION FOR POLITICAL SPACE IN IFE ZONE

Apart from Modakeke, which engaged in a renewed armed and open conflict with Ife between 1997 and 2000, others were involved in political competition. The renewed Ife–Modakeke conflict was apparently a response to the Ife palace political offensive. The communal conflict was primarily over two main contending issues, namely (i) the location of the headquarters of the newly created Ife East local government and (ii) the dispute over occupied land both in the metropolis and the villages. As was the case with the renewed conflict, the competition for political space in Ife zone was influenced, to a large extent, by Ooni Sijuwade whose perceived influence and network of connections apparently dwarfed the influence of the political class. Ooni Sijuwade's scheming benefitted the politicians close to him and the palace, as well as the retinue of town and palace chiefs who aided him. Although this began in the aborted Third Republic, it reached a crescendo in the Fourth Republic, starting in 1999. The likes of Senator Segun Bamigbetan, Hon. John Fasogbon, local government chairmen, councilors, and several political office holders benefitted from this process. In addition to alienating many Ife indigenes who did not benefit from Ooni Sijuwade's interference, such behavior, more importantly, alienated others groups in the zone that had an equal right to be selected.

The alienation of the Oyo sub-groups in Origbo and Modakeke was, in a way, the Ife's way of taking charge of the affairs of their domain, given their perception that the accommodation of these neighbors, particularly Modakeke, had been abused in the past. It was also a way of showing that the Oyo sub-groups were

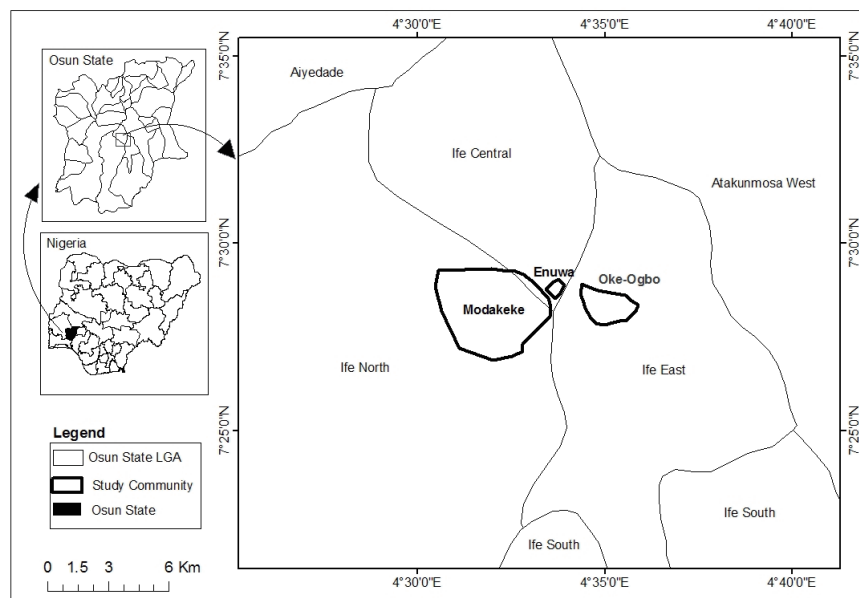


Fig. 3. Map of the Ife Central and Ife East local government councils, showing Modakeke, Enuwa, and Oke-Ogbo

not indigenous to the zone. This position, however, aroused the anger of the alienated groups who considered themselves part and parcel of Ife zone, having settled and lived there for a long time and regarding it as their home. Unlike the armed conflict that resulted in general insecurity and destruction of life and property, the competition for political space deepened, resulting in greater political maneuverings starting in 1999. Specifically, the creation of the Ife East Area Council to accommodate Modakeke did a lot to assuage their bruised feelings. However, the headquarters of the contentious Ife East local government remained in Ife, having been relocated from Enuwa in the heart of the city to Oke-Ogbo, a suburb of Ile-Ife.

IFE ZONAL POLITICS, 1999–2014

With the advent of civil rule in 1999, the Yoruba, as a major ethnic group, sought a single political platform for participation following their persecution under General Sani Abacha, Nigeria's military Head of State from 1993 to 1998. However, as in the First and Second Republics, there were political dissenters whose bases of political support were from groups such as Ogbomoso, Oyo, Ibadan, and Modakeke (Falola, 2003). Although the Alliance for Democracy (AD), a party formed by the Yoruba political elite and purportedly guided by the philosophy of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, dominated the political landscape of southwestern Nigeria in the 1999 general elections, the Peoples' Democratic Party

Table 1. Ethnic compositions of the four local government councils in Ife zone

Local Government	Dominant ethnic group(s)
Ife Central	Ife
Ife East	Ife, Oyo Modakeke
Ife North	Oyo Origbo (with a fraction of Ife mostly on the farmlands)
Ife South	Ifetedo (with a fraction of Ife and numerous Oyo settlers)

(PDP) controlled the Federal government and sought inroads into the Yoruba nation starting in 2003 (Afolayan, 2006). The crisis within the AD, whose impact reverberated most in Osun State, pitted Chief Iyiola Omisore, an Ife indigene, against other leaders, providing an opportunity for the PDP and other factions. Beyond heightening political tension, the peculiarity of Ife zonal politics made it expedient for the sub-ethnic groups in the zone to set in motion certain strategies to gain an advantage over others. The composition of ethnic groups in Ife zone (Table 1) made competition and compromise along sub-ethnic lines the rules of the game. Specifically, the search for relevance, accommodation, and identity, particularly by the sub-ethnic groups in the zone, led to political alignment and re-alignment both within the zone and the state, and at the national level.

Given the perceived overbearing nature of Ife in the zonal politics of the aborted Third Republic and the earlier part of the Fourth Republic, minority group solidarity was promoted. In the face of minority group solidarity against its interests, however, the leadership of Ile-Ife embarked on systematic reclamation of its farmlands across the four local government areas and those cultivated by minorities. This was aimed at successfully negotiating for votes in the unfolding political competition in the zone, in particular, and the state, in general. Implicitly, laying claim to land heritage in any part of the Ife region became an important means to a political end rather than just serving the purpose of cultivation or physical development, which constituted an end in itself.

The Ife approach was successful between 1999 and 2003. Under the platform of the AD, it successfully won every available elective position in the Ife Central (Honorable Adekunle Adeniji) and Ife East (Honorable Lambe Oyasope) local governments, while it had a substantial presence in both the Ife North (Honourable Funminiyi Awotinde as vice chairman) and Ife South (with many councilors) local governments. This was in addition to the various positions that Ife politicians secured at the state level, the foremost of which were the elections of Chief Omisore as deputy governor of Osun state, members of the House of Assembly, and appointments as commissioners. At the national level, the Ife benefitted immensely through their indigenes belonging to both the PDP and the AD; for example, the appointment of Chief Olagunju Adesakin as Nigeria's ambassador to the People's Republic of China and the election of Hon. Adewale Layade as a member of the House of Representatives.

The dominance of Ife in zonal politics was apparent everywhere, with the attendant benefits drawn from local, state, and national levels, and the alienation or exclusion of minority groups. Although sub-ethnic identity can provide an avenue for political mobilization in that members of sub-groups can be easily hoodwinked to support the aspirations of leaders (as was the case in Ife zonal politics), it was

apparent that accommodations occurred mostly at political party and class levels. Additionally, political benefits do not largely accrue on the basis of minority or majority group solidarity. Although the ‘dividends of democracy’ are usually distributed on the basis of political divisions, the vibrancy of leaders and their visibility are central to the capability of attracting benefits to their area. What could not be disproven, however, was the desire of political leaders for visibility, whether minority or majority, with the aim of attracting benefits to their areas. Beyond all these permutations, the experience of Ife zonal politics clearly showed that leaders, irrespective of their sub-ethnic affiliations, only attracted benefits to themselves, which in a sense rendered the minority–majority contest irrelevant or useless. This implies that minority–majority classifications are only tools for mobilization in order to secure offices. Interestingly, what obtained between 1999 and 2003 persisted in other forms, after 2003.

IFE AS A MINORITY GROUP IN OSUN STATE POLITICS

The argument thus far has shown that the Oyo sub-groups in Ife zone saw themselves as minorities, and rightly so, given that beyond their accommodation in the administration until the 1980s, they had been generally marginalized despite their considerable population, political vibrancy, and fierce struggle for recognition and relevance. The outcome was the domination of politics and the ability to influence policies and the direction of development by Ife indigenes. However, when the big picture is considered, it would appear that the decisions by the Ife political elite, hiding under the majority–minority permutation to rein in the Oyo elements, could not be divorced from the fear that they themselves could also be appropriately labelled as a minority, even within their zone, given their precarious existence in the wider Osun state and Yorubaland, and surrounded as they were by mostly Oyo elements. They often refer to the desire of the Oyo sub-group to seek solutions to their issues by looking beyond the zone and even the Osun east senatorial district within which the zone is located.

Useful here is the definition of a minority group by Harris (1959), who stated that a minority is, “A sub-group within a larger society and that its members are subject to disabilities in the form of prejudices, discrimination, segregation, or persecution at the hands of another kind of sub-group, usually called a majority”. While the Modakeke and Origbo communities have experienced this more since the 1980s, the claim in Ife was that the Oyo population had always networked with Oyo outside the zone to defend, protect, and advance their interests. A graphic analysis of the ethno-political structure of Osun state lends credence to the Ife claim, as shown in Table 2 and Fig. 4.

Table 2. The ethno-political structure of Osun state

Senatorial district	Local government areas	Dominant ethnic group(s)
Osun Central	Boluwaduro, Ifedayo, Ifelodun, Ila, Irepodun, Odo Otin, Olorunda, Orolu, Osogbo	Other Oyo populations, Igbomina, Ijesa
Osun East	Atakumosa East, Atakumosa West, Ife Central, Ife South, Ife East, Ife North, Ilesha East, Ilesha West, Obokun, Oriade	Ife, Ijesa, Other Oyo populations, Oyo Origbo and Oyo Modakeke
Osun West	Aiyedaaade, Aiyedire, Ede North, Ede South, Egbedore, Ejigbo, Irewole, Isokan, Iwo, Ola-Oluwa	Other Oyo populations

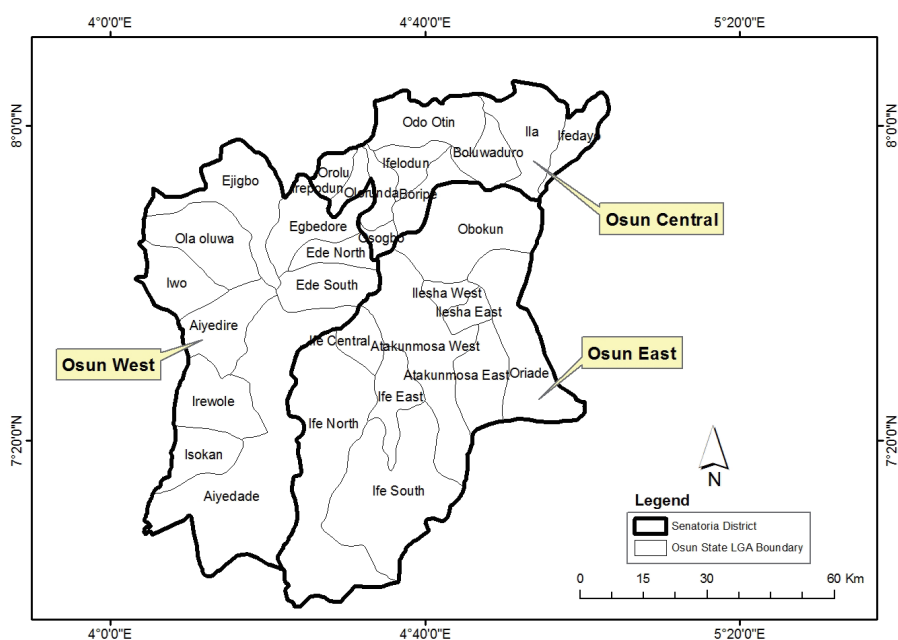
**Fig. 4.** Map of Osun state showing the composition of the three senatorial districts

Table 2 and Fig. 4 clearly illustrate the dominant position of the Oyo sub-group in all three senatorial districts in Osun state. In effect, this made minorities of other sub-groups such as Ife, Igbomina, and Ijesa. Unlike the Igbomina and Ijesa, who had their presence either in another senatorial district or outside Osun state, the Ife sub-group was restricted to the Ife zone. Additionally, no other sub-group had Oyo populations as closely settled with them as the Ife; as such, they faced unique challenges. Beyond this, the Ife still had a dominant population in the zone and the Oyo populations were mostly not in a position to discriminate against or persecute them. What could not be ruled out was the likeli-

hood of unification with others within and outside the zone, as has been the case at different times, the effect of which has been relatively limited. Capotorti (1991) describes a minority group as:

A group that under-number the rest of the population and does not occupy a dominant position in the state; its members are citizens of that country (or state) and possess a number of ethnic, religious, or linguistic characteristics other than the rest of the population, and experience, at least implicitly, a sense of solidarity aimed at preserving their culture, tradition, religion, and the language.

Although this description is instructive, it neither applies to nor captures the situation of Ife indigenes in Ife zonal politics, and so the claim of being a minority is difficult to sustain, although it could apply as far as Osun state politics was concerned.

IFE AND THE MINORITY QUESTION

Intra-class crisis within the ruling AD in Osun state led to the alienation of Chief Omisore and his eventual removal as the Deputy Governor in 2001. This generated other developments, such as the death of Hon. Odunayo Olagbaju, an Ife indigene in the Osun state House of Assembly, also in 2001. This, combined with the murder of Chief Bola Ige, a sitting Federal Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation in 2001, following his humiliation at Ile-Ife eight days before, led to the persecution of Ife politicians and their mass exodus to the PDP⁽¹⁰⁾. The outcome was an effort to re-direct the politics of Ife, particularly given the negative relationship that had developed between Chief Adebisi Akande, the Osun state governor from 1999 to 2003, and Ooni Sijuwade⁽¹¹⁾. The allegation of the complicity of Ooni Sijuwade in the murder of Chief Ige by Chief Akande came at the height of this mutual antagonism⁽¹²⁾.

The shift in political allegiance to the PDP coupled with the growing support for Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria's president of Yoruba descent, and the 'conquest' of southwestern Nigeria by the PDP resulted in political gains for Ife indigenes. The elections of Chief Omisore as a senator even while in detention, and Hon. Fashogbon as a member of the Federal House of Representatives, and the appointments of Chiefs Femi Fani-Kayode and Bashir Isola Awotorebo as Federal Ministers at different times before 2007 increased the visibility of Ile-Ife in the politics of Ife zone, in particular, and that of Osun state, in general. It would appear that beyond those elected, those appointed got their positions because of their accommodation by the larger political class, aided by the overwhelming influence of Ooni Sijuwade and, more importantly, because it was the turn of Osun east (composed of Ife and Ijesa sub-groups) to produce a minister who would represent Osun state at the federal level. Ife, because of its political leanings, was favored. The appointment of a minister representing Osun state from other senatorial districts lends credence to this⁽¹³⁾. While the political visibility of

Ife provoked resentment and jealousy in other groups in Modakeke and Origbo, it did not translate into any meaningful development for either Ile-Ife or Ife zone, a clear indication of the fact that the leaders, whether appointed or elected, were first and foremost representatives of their political party and less representatives of their sub-groups.

As it was at the state level, the intra-party crisis, the effects of which reverberated in Ife zone, also played itself out among political ‘gladiators’ at the local level. The emergence of the *Tobalase* (supporting Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola, Osun state governor from 2003 to 2010) and *Omitide* (supporting Chief Omisore) groups within the PDP, reminiscent of the *Erinjogunola* and the *Talaka Parapo* politics of the First Republic in the AG, led to a political realignment, the effect of which was borne by the minority Origbo and Ifetedo communities. The failure of Chief Omisore to secure the PDP gubernatorial ticket in 2007 caused him to remain in his senatorial position and, in the process, prevented Hon. Ariyo Adebawale, an Ipetumodu indigene (one of the Origbo communities), from contesting against the earlier agreement. Hon. Adebawale had, in 2003, stepped down in favor of Hon. Fasogbon on the condition that he was going to be considered for the position in 2007. Although this was more of an intra-party problem, it further strained Ife–Origbo relations, more so that the hope that an Origbo indigene was going to represent the zone in the central legislature was shattered.⁽¹⁴⁾ Unlike the meddling of the Ife palace in 1955 in an intra-party affair that eventually turned out in favor of the minority Oyo elements, the palace interference in 2007 worked against the minority and, as might be expected, they found a way to retaliate. This informed a unanimous resolution by other sub-groups within Ife and Ife zone to fight the common enemy in the Ife sub-group tactically. This was the situation until the emergence of Governor Rauf Aregbesola, an Ijesa, in 2010 following his victory at the Court of Appeal, a result that changed the political permutations in Osun state, generally, and Ife zone, in particular.

IFE: FACING THE BACKLASH

The emergence of Governor Aregbesola on the platform of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the metamorphosis of a faction of the old AD *vis-à-vis* the overwhelming presence of PDP in Ile-Ife, produced a situation wherein almost all of his moves were viewed with strong suspicion or rejected outright. While the Omisore factor could have been responsible, the massive propaganda campaign against the AD and its successor political parties like the ACN and later the All Progressive Congress (APC) in Ile-Ife raised a strong opposition against Governor Aregbesola. This occurred despite the flight of some Ife elites to ACN. The governor was alleged to have worked against Ife by appointing only one commissioner, Hon. Sikiru Ayedun, from the zone as opposed to the three appointed from the Ijesa sub-group. The appointee was also alleged to be an Ife indigene abroad, given that he was based in Lagos. While Ife felt alienated with this development, Modakeke, which had always been in opposition, embraced the governor and his party even when it did not get any position or office in the government.

Table 3. Results of the Osun state Gubernatorial Election held on August 9, 2014

LOCAL GOVT	APC	PDP
Atakumosa East	9,287	6,294
Atakumosa West	6,928	5,142
Ayedade	12,801	11,255
Ayedire	7,725	7,813
Boluwaduro	4,891	5,035
Boripe	12,723	9,344
Ede North	15,403	10,427
Ede South	11,738	7,462
Egbedore	10,615	7,024
Ejigbo	17,700	12,490
Ife Central	9,680	24,555
Ife East	13,821	20,831
Ife North	8,603	9,841
Ife South	7,325	12,811
Ifedayo	4,225	3,982
Ifelodun	17,447	12,442
Ila	10,825	7,916
Ilesa East	16,106	5,913
Ilesa West	15,427	5,449
Irepodun	13,314	7,386
Irewole	18,328	10,330
Isokan	9,758	10,028
Iwo	20,827	15,493
Obokun	11,696	8,618
Odo-Otin	11,950	12,900
Ola-Oluwa	7,927	4,963
Olorunda	26,551	8,483
Oriade	12,523	10,214
Orolu	8,558	6,786
Osogbo	39,983	11,513
Total	394,685	292,740

This was perhaps the situation with the Origbo communities, as well as other outlying communities like Olode and Ifetedo, which probably saw in the new development the opportunity to seek political relevance and find accommodations that could lead to their emancipation from Ife.

Their support for Governor Aregbesola and his party notwithstanding, the minority groups in Ife zone could not alter the political decisions in the zone or at the state level. Not only were their votes neutralized by that of Ife but also their desire to have their representatives of choice, some of whom were Ife indigenes but members of ACN, did not materialize. However, their support for the ruling party at the state level has attracted some measure of development to their areas. Significantly, the antagonistic disposition of Modakeke, in particular, to the gubernatorial ambition of Chief Omisore in 2014 lends credence to the backlash effect of Ife domination. More importantly, it strengthens the claim or likelihood of Ife becoming a minority in state politics, as shown in Table 3. Even when Chief Omisore received an overwhelming majority of votes in three of the four local councils in Ife zone, with or without the support of the minority groups, it was far below what would win him an election for the state governor given the overwhelming number of votes for the top contender, Governor Aregbesola, from

other parts of the state. The problem of antagonism, alienation, inability to find accommodations, and exclusions resulted in a unified opposition, which played itself out in Ife zone with some occasional overlap with Osun state politics, reaching its climax in 2014; this exemplifies the problematic inter- and intra-group relations among ethnic and sub-ethnic nationalities in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The minority question remains a potent one in the history of relationships in Ife zone. Different groups have claimed, at various times, to have been the majority or minority depending on their perception or their inability to find accommodations. Although Ile-Ife may appear to be the major beneficiary of the political game over the years, the zone did not fare well in the distribution of political dividends, particularly at the macro level. What seems to have worked for Ile-Ife was its overriding influence on the various groups who resided in the zone and, especially, the affirmative agreement by other ethnic groups in the zone that Ile-Ife was the owner of the land within the metropolis and the outlying villages. Politicians often resort to these sentiments to mobilize support from among residents. For instance, the unwillingness of the settler-farmers to sacrifice their farms on the altar of politics often forced them to submit to the dictates of Ife, even when they seemed to have better candidates for both elective and appointive positions.

Given its population, and without a strong united front from the minority elements in the region, Ife will continue to have its way, producing leaders in different guises and dominating politics in the zone. Since political accommodation transcends population size, and the fact that political isolationism will spell doom if Ife chooses to go about it alone (especially with the fluid nature of politics and political alignment in Nigeria), it would seem that both the minority and majority groups in Ife zone require a common front in order to benefit greatly in the broader regional and, by extension, national politics. In other words, there is a need for political integration, devoid of antagonism among the groups within such a coalition. Significantly, the ability of minority groups to align their aspirations with those of the land-owning Ile-Ife indigenous population will reduce conflicts of interest to a bare minimum.

Open confrontation by minorities in Ife zone against Ile-Ife on the political scene may not be a feasible solution to the question of perceived or obvious marginalization; rather, consultation, compromise, consensus, alignment, and realignment of interests will prove useful. The usefulness of these tools will, however, depend on the extent to which the supposed dominant or majority group, in this case Ile-Ife, is willing to conciliate or accommodate the minorities in the region. Of course, realization on the part of Ife of the need for identity, representation, and control by minority groups both nationally and globally will go a long way to facilitate this realignment. Otherwise, fierce competition, mutual and violent antagonism, and divisive tendencies with attendant consequences such as

inadequate representation and infrastructural deficiency will continue to plague the region.

NOTES

- (1) The seven Origbo communities comprise Ipetumodu, Asipa, Isope, Yakoyo, Akinlalu, Moro, and Edunabon.
- (2) Interview with Chief K. E. Ajayi a.k.a. Born for life, a community leader and former chairman, Oranmiyan Central local government now made up of four local government areas, namely Ife Central, Ife East, Ife North, Ife South, and Ife East Area Council March 13, 2009. See also, 'Democracy and Dissolution of Ife Council' published by the Talaka Parapo during the Action Group crisis in Ile-Ife in 1964.
- (3) Press release by the Ife community in 1981 and signed by Chief D. E. Olagbaju and Dr. O. Eluyemi at the outbreak of conflict between Modakeke and Ife.
- (4) Interview with Mrs. Hawawu Makinde, 85 years, Durowande Street, off Oluorogbo Road 7, Ile-Ife, October 10, 2010.
- (5) Interview with Prince Adebisi Adetoro, 56 years, community leader and member of the vigilante group in Ile-Ife 20 May, 2012.
- (6) Interview with Chief K. E. Ajayi on March 13, 2009.
- (7) Extract from the text of an address by Chief Bola Ige on Monday, August 10, 1981 while inaugurating the Consultative Committee.
- (8) Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Communal Disturbances in Oranmiyan Central Local Government Area, submitted on June 15, 1981.
- (9) Alhaji Fasasi Olafare (a.k.a. Atoferu), (75 years), PDP Chairman in Ife Central Local Government was with Chief Remi Fani-Kayode in the Second Republic that lasted till December 1983 and witnessed the development. Interviewed June 12, 2010.
- (10) Prince Gbenga Omiwole (51) Executive Secretary, Ife Development Board said this will probably be the first time that the majority of the Ife political class, including the Oba, will shift to the right politically for a common cause. Interviewed October 15, 2011.
- (11) The letter ref SEC.29/T1/64 dated August 16, 2001, and letter ref SEC.29/69 dated September 5, 2001, respectively signed personally by Chief Adebisi Akande (Governor of Osun State) to Oba Okunade Sijuwade (Ooni of Ife) on the creation of an area office for Modakeke, are good examples.
- (12) Chief Adebisi Akande; Official correspondence to the AIG 'D' Department (Force CID), Force Headquarters, Abuja titled 'Preliminary Information on December 2–December 23, 2001 (Exhibit G in The State vs Iyiola Omisore).
- (13) For instance, Alhaji Jeleel Adesiyon from Ode-Omu in Osun Central senatorial district was appointed as the Minister in charge of Police Affairs and as a replacement for Erelu Olusola Obada, an Ijesa indigene, who formerly served as Minister of State for Defence (Navy) and as the Osun state candidate in the federal executive council constituted by President Goodluck Jonathan. This was after Chief Femi Fani-Kayode and Isola Bashir Awotorebo, both Ife indigenes, had served as Federal Minister under Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.
- (14) Mr. Juwon Oyebanji, 40 years old, a native of Ipetumodu and a staunch supporter of Hon. Ariyo said that it was the last straw that broke the camel's back in the Ife-Origbo political alliance. Interviewed on May 10, 2011.

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